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THE *ON-LINE* PLANT PEST HANDBOOK

www.ct.gov/caes

The Experiment Station published its first report on effective and practical ways to control plant diseases in 1889. In the many years that followed, Station scientists have published hundreds of scientific reports on all aspects of plants and agriculture. These have appeared in many different forms and forums but one source of information that many Connecticut residents, homeowner or farmer, urbanite or suburbanite, have found particularly useful has been the *Plant Pest Handbook*. The first *Plant Pest Handbook* was published in two volumes in 1933 and 1934. The most recent edition of the *Handbook* was published in 1956 and many, well-used copies can still be found on bookshelves throughout the state!

In 2001, we were pleased to present a new version of the *Handbook*- this time in electronic form. The *On-Line Plant Pest Handbook* had been totally updated to reflect changes in the plants that are now grown in Connecticut and their current disease and insect problems. The new *Handbook* had also been updated to emphasize a “Plant Health Management” or “Integrated Pest Management” approach to dealing with plant pests and their impact. Among the many key features of this electronic version were:

- easily updated as new diseases or pests appear or as new information about a particular pest becomes available;
- easily updated as pesticide registrations or availability change;
- highly interactive since it allows seamless access to additional information posted in other areas of the Experiment Station Website such as fact sheets on particular problems and email addresses of people to contact for more information or questions;

The *On-Line Handbook* is also dynamic. We will probably always consider this a “work-in-progress” that is continually being updated. In 2006, we are in the process of updating the handbook by editing text, adding new information, and incorporating suggestions from users of the *Handbook* from Connecticut as well as from national and international origin. A key objective is to add more color photos. This should greatly enhance the usefulness of the *Handbook* for all users.

Although the *Handbook* is electronic, it is important to remember that any section of the *Handbook* can be printed. For example, you can look up a plant and print a copy of that particular section for further reference.

HOW IS THE HANDBOOK ORGANIZED?

The *Handbook* is organized into four sections.

A. Introduction-

- this section provides a brief description of the *Handbook* and lists the Station Scientists who contributed sections;

B. Plant Health Problems-

- this section provides an introduction to plant diseases, general background information on plant pathogens, and strategies for management and control;

C. Insects and Their Injuries to Plants-

- this section provides an introduction to insects, their injuries to plants, and general background information;

D. Search by Host-

- this section provides an alphabetical listing of plants by their common name; there are over 240 plant hosts covered in the *Handbook*;
- once you select the plant, you will see a listing of all of the key pest problems on that particular host in Connecticut;

WHAT TYPE OF INFORMATION IS LISTED FOR EACH HOST PLANT?

• Plant Health Problems-

- arranged by importance within each pathogen type (diseases caused by fungi, bacteria, phytoplasmas, viruses, and nematodes);
- physiological and environmental problems are also covered;
- each section about a plant health problem provides information on symptoms and on how to manage or minimize the impact of that problem; when available, hot links will bring you to additional information (e.g., fact sheets) on that topic that is posted in other areas of the Experiment Station web site;

• Insect Problems

- arranged alphabetically within host;
- each section about an insect provides information on damage and on how to manage or minimize the impact of that pest; when available, hot links will bring you to additional information (e.g., fact sheets) on that topic that is posted in other areas of the Experiment Station web site;

HOW CAN THE HANDBOOK BE IMPROVED?

The *Handbook* is not all-inclusive with regard to plant hosts and pests. However, efforts were made to address the most common plants grown in Connecticut and their key pests. We welcome comments and suggestions for improving this resource at any time.

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